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men nowadays, accustomed to the occasional use of a pen, would find it easy or possible to acquire in odd moments ability to do the precise lettering that a draftsman turns off so swiftly and surely? It may well be that if Einhard had had at command our technical vocabulary of paleography, he would have said plainly that the emperor tried to acquire skill in the "Caroline minuscule"; but having no distinguishing appellation for this any more than for the "Merovingian," he merely said that Charlemagne "tried exercises in writing." There can hardly be a question that the reference is not to the practice of the highly ornamental bookhand brought over by Alcuin from the York School, though Mr. Garrod appears to think this the only possible alternative to ordinary Merovingian, and therefore rejects it.

E. T. M.

The Defeat of Varus and the German Frontier Policy of Augustus.

By W. A. OLDFATHER and H. V. CANTER. University of Illinois (*Studies in the Social Sciences*, IV, 2), 1915. Pp. 118, 8vo. \$0.75.

The special study here set forth does not so essentially concern itself with the defeat of Varus and the modern glorification of Arminius as with the question springing from that episode, whether the defeat forced and effected a decided change in the policy of Augustus regarding the settlement of the Roman frontier in this region. Most modern historians agree that Augustus had intended to push forward the limit of the Empire to the Elbe, but, consequent upon the failure of his arms in the Westphalian country, altered his determination, withdrew to the Rhine, and recommended to his successors the holding of that river as the formal boundary. With this almost unanimous majority judgment the essayists disagree. They maintain that the expeditions to the north of the Rhine were merely for disciplinary or demonstrative purposes; that Augustus never began nor intended to reduce the trans-Rhenane region to the form of a province, but only so to impress the neighboring tribes with the Roman power that they would cease to be actively hostile, and, settling down under a sort of Roman supervision, would constitute a buffer between Roman territory and the warlike communities beyond themselves.

The argument of the essayists runs somewhat as follows: The ancient sources regarding the defeat of Varus and its consequences are discordant among themselves and distinctly rhetorical in tendency; they cannot safely be appealed to as authorities on the Augustan purposes and policies. The further arguments by which various modern writers have bolstered up the current opinion are not well founded. Rome surely never even began to introduce her government into this territory. Nor is there any sufficient reason why, if she had thus intended, the policy should have been given up. The defeat of Varus was certainly not a sufficient reason; and the whole condition of the character and action of Augustus in other directions as well as in this is defi-

nately against the notion that his intention had ever been to extend Roman dominion to the Elbe. All that he meant to do and needed to do was to make Roman influence in that region predominant and thus to safeguard the actual frontier. This also is in accord with well-known Roman action in other frontier territories.

This summary is naturally a very imperfect representation of the work of the essayists, which presents a minute analysis and criticism of the individual views of numerous ancient and modern writers, and fortifies the whole argument by voluminous footnotes—nearly three hundred of them, and many of them long. The essay is a good, solid piece of historical criticism, and ought to have permanent value and effect. To the writer of this notice it appears more effective in demolishing the certainty with which what we may call the traditional view has been held than in proving it surely false. It may be conceded that the testimony of the ancient witnesses is conflicting and unreliable. Then we are thrown back upon the realm of probabilities, and about probabilities we must expect varying judgments. To take as examples one or two of the considerations urged in their own support by the essayists: it will not appear to all critics equally probable that Augustus cannot have contemplated the subjugation of this tract of German land because he was by character, principle, and action a man of peace, and did not fight for the acquisition of new territory, but only in self-defense, when war was forced upon him (does not this sound, by the way, strikingly like certain statements made about a much later Caesar?). Nor would everyone be equally convinced that if Augustus had formed the plan of reducing this region, he never would have surrendered it in the face of military reverses. On the other hand, it would appear to some people quite conceivable that Augustus might change his mind, in spite of, if not because of, the defeat of Varus, and leave to a more convenient season even the discipline of the Germans for that defeat (it took a long time for the Romans to avenge even Carrhae). Nor does the disagreement of historians about the reason for the projected conquest and the reason for the change of plan prove that no such scheme could have been in mind. It only proves at most that we are in uncertainty about it. One might go even farther: granted that the ancient writers are rhetorical and vain; yet the intimation or statement that a conquest of Germany was purposed may have had a sound foundation in their tradition. It can readily be seen that part of our difficulty arises from the fact that (granted its existence) the project was not very far advanced before its abandonment. There is not much material on which to work.

The present writer is not a professed historian, and it is with diffidence that he even approaches the topic upon which the essayists have spent so much learning and consideration. But having gone as far as he already has, he may be permitted to state further the opinion (it is hardly more than that) which for many years he has been tentatively inclined to hold. The apparent belief of the ancients that Augustus contemplated the extension of Roman dominion in some form or other to the Elbe is not readily to be disregarded. But it

may well have been in the emperor's mind the consideration of a possibility rather than a formulated purpose. The military excursions into the region are so imperfectly known that judgment is difficult. But their apparent character is such as to be consonant with the idea that they were experimental reconnaissances rather than definite movements of conquest or occupation (cf. the expeditions of Julius Caesar into Britain). And for some reason or reasons which we may only surmise, Augustus finally rejected the scheme that he had tentatively considered, and settled upon the Rhine as the formal boundary. The limitation appears to modern minds a wise one. It is far from certain that Augustus could have reached his final decision without experiment.

Such a position as this the detailed investigations of the essayists do not appear to have rendered untenable, though a defense of it against their heavy artillery would doubtless call for more digging, and the exposition for more space.

E. T. M.

A Short History of Classical Scholarship, from the Sixth Century B.C. to the Present Day. By SIR JOHN EDWIN SANDYS, LITT.D., F.B.A. Cambridge: The University Press, 1915. Pp. xvi+455, with 26 illustrations. 7s. 6d. net.

The *History of Classical Scholarship* in three volumes by Sir John Sandys is well known to all classical scholars. That erudite work is by far the best for general reference, but rarely will a student read it from beginning to end "unless he be a very heroic seeker after knowledge."

The present book compresses into less than five hundred pages all the subjects dealt with more in detail in the larger work. Such a book should be of great value to students in our graduate schools, where the history of scholarship might well receive more attention than at present.

The book contains twenty-six illustrations, mainly portraits of classical scholars. The spurious portrait of Hemsterhuis, found in the larger work (as well as in Gudeman's *Imagines*), has been replaced by the genuine likeness. The closing pages of the book deal with American scholarship, and among new names appear those of Goodwin, Wright, and Morgan. The portrait of no American scholar is found in the book, although the fine features of Professor Goodwin would have added much to its general attractiveness.

The least satisfactory chapter of the book is that dealing with "Comparative Philology" (pp. 349-52). In all cases, references are given to the first edition of Giles's *Manual of Comparative Philology*, although the second edition appeared in 1901. Delbrück's *Einleitung* is nowhere mentioned, although it has already passed through five editions, and was long ago translated into English. On p. 351, Osthoff is spoken of as still living, but no mention is made anywhere of his best-known classical work, *Zur Geschichte des Perfects im Indogermanischen* (1884), which deals particularly with Greek and Latin.